



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

U.S. Census Bureau

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions

AGENCY: U.S. Census Bureau, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13.

DATES: To ensure consideration, written comments must be submitted on or before (insert date 60 days after date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER).

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW,

Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at PRAComments@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Erica Filipek, U.S. Census Bureau, EID, CENHQ Room 7K057, 4600 Silver Hill Road, Washington, DC 20233, telephone (301)763-5161 (or via the Internet at Erica.Mary.Filipek@census.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

I. Abstract

The U.S. Census Bureau plans to request a three-year extension of the current Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance of the Survey of Housing Starts, Sales and Completions, also known as the Survey of Construction (SOC). We also plan revisions to the current collection. The SOC collects monthly data on new residential construction from a sample of owners or builders. The Census Bureau uses the Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) electronic questionnaires SOC-QI/SF.1 and SOC-QI/MF.1 to collect data on start and completion dates of construction, physical characteristics of the structure (floor area, number of bathrooms, type of heating system, etc), and if applicable, date of sale, sales price, and type of financing. The SOC provides widely used measures of construction activity, including the economic indicators Housing Starts and Housing Completions, which are from the New Residential Construction series, and New Residential Sales.

After working with the survey sponsor and key data users, the Census Bureau has decided to add one new data item to the single-family questionnaire regarding ceiling height.

With respect to survey burden, the Census Bureau samples about 1,620 new buildings each month (19,440 per year). Census Bureau staff inquire about the progress of each building multiple times until it is completed (and a sales contract is signed, if it is a single-family house that is built for sale). For single-family buildings, there are an average of 8.11 interviews and for multifamily buildings, an average of 7.0 interviews. The total number of interviews conducted each year for single-family buildings is about 102,186 and for multifamily buildings is about 47,880. Each interview takes 5 minutes on average. Therefore, the total annual burden is 12,506 hours.

II. Method of Collection

The Census Bureau uses its field representatives to collect the data through CAPI.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0607-0110.

Form Number(s): SOC-QI/SF.1 and SOC-QI/MF.1.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Individuals or households, business or other for-profit.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 19,440.

Estimated Time Per Response: 5 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 12,506.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to public: \$0.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

Legal Authority: Title 13 U.S.C. Sections 131 and 182.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Sheleen Dumas,

Departmental PRA Lead, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

BILLING CODE: 3510-07-P.

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